

Training your dog does not always require the expertise of a trainer. You can do it yourself with just a little bit of preparation. When people have trouble training their own dogs it is usually because they do not know how to communicate with their dog. Dogs speak a different language from ours and learning that language is the first, best step you can take towards training your dog. Training should not be a chore. It should be fun for both you and your dog. Think of training as a gift that you give yourself and your dog; the gift of better communication and a deeper bond based on trust and understanding.

Any of the following books can help you to reach that goal:

Decoding Your Dog by the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists, edited by Debbie Horwitz and John Ciribassi with Steve Dale.

This should be the first book you buy, regardless of the age of your dog or how long you have owned it. It helps explain common dog behaviors and covers prevention as well as what to do once a problem develops.

Twelve Terrible Dog Training Mistakes by Suzanne Hetts

This is a fantastic, easy to read book that will help you better understand how to avoid making some very common mistakes when training your dog. If you have already made many of these mistakes, don't worry, this book can help you to do better as well as help to correct some already existing problems!

If you have acquired a puppy and only want to purchase one book, I highly recommend *Puppy Start Right* by Ken and Debbie Martin.

Family Friendly Dog Training by Patricia McConnell and Aimee Moore

The Power of Positive Dog Training by Pat Miller

These are two excellent books that give you basic, easy to follow instructions for training dogs of any age to perform basic commands such as sit, heel, come, and stay.

If you want to learn more, consider the following as well:

Culture Clash by Jean Donaldson

The Other End of the Leash by Patricia McConnell

These two books do not provide information about training per se but are very interesting and easy books to read that explain how dogs see the world and why they behave the way they do.

Don't Shoot the Dog by Karen Pryor

This book is an old classic about dog behavior and training. Karen Pryor was the first trainer to use clicker training for marine mammals so she is considered the pioneer in this field. It is easy to read and fascinating!

Getting Started: Clicker Training for Dogs by Karen Pryor

This book is the basic "How To" guide for clicker training from the leading expert in the field. To learn more about clicker training, go to www.clickertraining.com Clicker training is a fun and rewarding way to interact with your dog. Try it: your dog will love you for it!